

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
CONSERVATION STRATEGY

COORDINATING ACTIVITIES REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1988

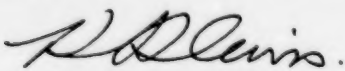
January 31, 1989

The Hon. Gilbert R. Clements
Minister Responsible for the
Provincial Conservation Strategy
Government of Prince Edward Island

Sir:

It is my pleasure and honor to submit to you the Coordinating
Activities Report for the Provincial Conservation Strategy for
the period ended December 31, 1988.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K. Lewis'.

Kingsley Lewis,
Coordinator

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A. Background and Overview to the Strategy

Across Canada and internationally there is a growing awareness of the interdependence of economic development and environmental sensibility. The report of the United Nations Task Force known as the "Brundtland Commission" - Our Common Future -, and Canada's Report of the National Task Force on the Economy and Environment, established by the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers (CCREM) are representative of this increasing understanding.

Prior to the formation of the National Task Force however, Prince Edward Island undertook the preparation of the first conservation strategy in the Country. The process began in the summer of 1986 with a directive from Executive Council to prepare the strategy. A major milestone was reached in March 1987 with its establishment as a formal document approved by Executive Council and tabled in the Legislative Assembly of the Province.

The preparation of the Provincial Conservation Strategy was undertaken through a process which saw the formation of several Committees made up of civil servants (both Provincial and Federal), representatives of non-government environmental organizations and academic institutions and private citizens. These Committees addressed the principal conservation issues confronting the Province including soil degradation and

conservation, fish and wildlife management, water quality and pollution control, landscape protection and coastal zone management. Direction was provided through a Coordinating Committee and continuity through a common Secretary.

The resulting Strategy contains approximately fifty major recommendations grouped under the following chapter headings:

- a. Introduction
- b. Agriculture
- c. Forestry
- d. Transportation
- e. Fish and Wildlife
- f. Coastal Zone
- g. Landscape, Land Use Planning and Tourism
- h. Water Management and Pollution Control
- i. Education and Public Awareness
- j. Volunteer Groups
- k. The Role of Government
- l. Conclusions

The Provincial Conservation Strategy is an understandable step in the evolution of a process which began, in a modern sense, in the early 1970's with the first Royal Commission on Land Use and Land Ownership. Legislatively this was followed by the Planning Act of 1974, and the first Environmental Protection Act, (also in

1974). The process also owes a great deal to the efforts of non-government organizations and the media both of which focused attention on environmental and conservation matters.

Prince Edward Island's economy is rooted in agriculture and forestry, the inshore fishery and aquaculture, tourism, food processing and services. Each of these economic engines is in turn dependent on the set of resources which comprise the Province's land, water and air - the biosphere. The quality of these resources is the basis of the Province's future economic fortunes and, in addition, help to shape its social, cultural and physical future and well being. It is little wonder, therefore, that sustainable development, emerged as the theme of the Provincial Conservation Strategy, and plays an important role in the continuing efforts to improve the Provincial economy.

Organization for Implementation

The "mission" or goal of the Provincial Conservation Strategy is to ensure that the concept of sustainable development, through proper conservation measures and environmental management, is an ongoing part of the ordinary life of Prince Edward Island as expressed through the activities of governments, non-government organizations and the private sector.

Operationally this implies that the approach to implementation, in its governmental sense, places much of the responsibility for implementation on line departments and agencies. It also implies, at other levels, that there are very significant roles to be played by non-government organizations and the private sector.

To facilitate this government established a separate coordinating function with a small staff and a separate budget to promote implementation, identify linkages, assist community groups and non-government organizations and provide for public education respecting sustainable development and conservation. In addition an Environmental Advisory Council was established in mid 1987 to advise the Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs, whose Department is responsible for environmental matters. Unless there is no practical alternative a deliberate attempt has been made to ensure that the work is carried out as a line function. The main exceptions to this are the fulfilling of the Secretary's role for the Environmental Advisory Council, administration of the Strategy's budget and direct assistance to non-government organizations and community groups in implementing projects under the Island Conservation Assistance Program.

Much of the early work in implementing the Strategy has been process related. Many of the benefits which result from this approach are intangible and long term and are, therefore,

difficult to measure in a quantitative way. Because the approach to implementation is through existing line departments and Agencies, much of what is reported here is the result of these Departments and Agencies efforts as well as those of environmental organizations and individuals who have contributed but are not a part of the Coordination Office directly. Conversely this Report is not an attempt to record all sustainable development activities and initiatives within the Province. It is limited to those matters with which the Coordination Office has been directly involved and for which there are recordable events.

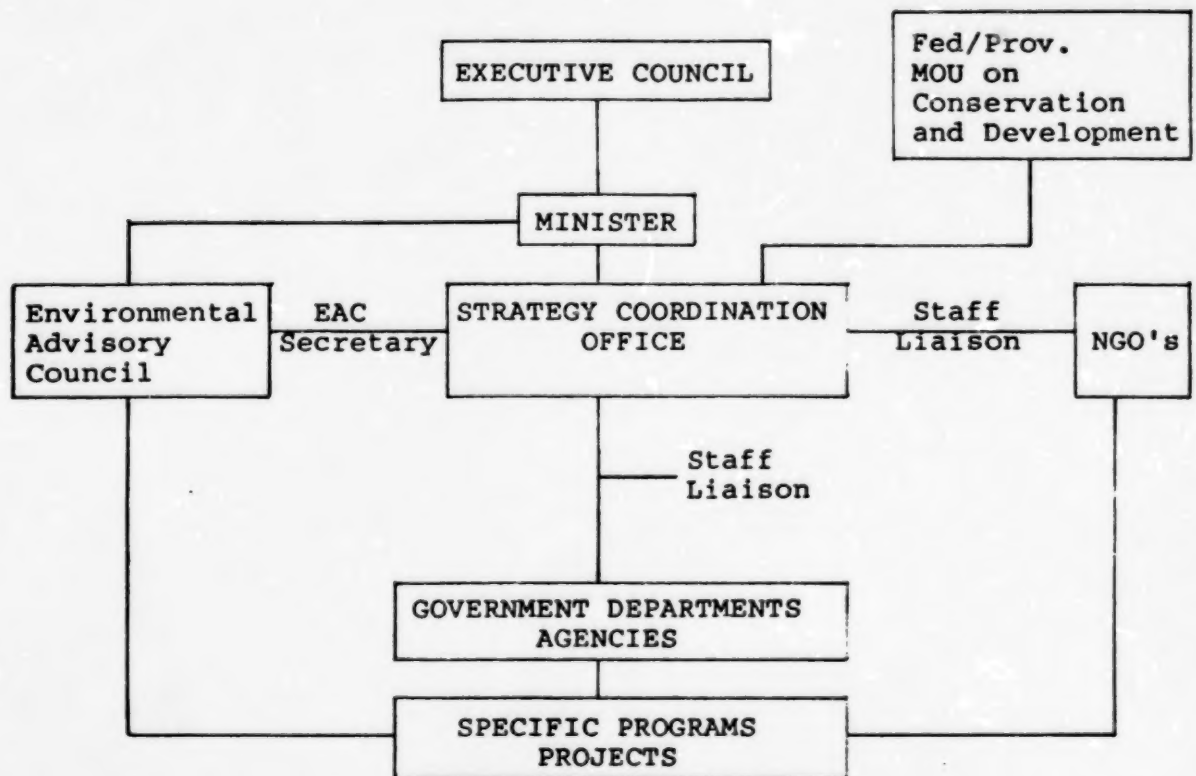
Reference to the individual Departmental or Agency or non-government organization activity reports should be made to gain a greater insight into the sustainable development efforts being made across the province.

Initially the Coordinator's position was a dual appointment with that of Executive Director of the Land Use Commission. In mid year, with the impending retirement of the person involved, it was decided to make the position a dual appointment with the position of Director of Provincial Planning, a newly created position in response to the Provincial Planning mandate contained within the new Planning Act which was proclaimed in May, 1988.

Particular thanks are due to all Departments and Agencies, both Provincial and Federal, and the non-government organizations who have assisted in implementing the strategy since its inception.

FIGURE 1

ORGANIZATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION



COORDINATING ACTIVITIES

A. Legislative, Policy and Federal-Provincial Initiatives

During the reporting period a number of legislative and policy initiatives which support or assist in implementing the Provincial Conservation Strategy have been undertaken. They were:

1. Legislative

A new Planning Act was passed during the 1988 session of the Legislative Assembly. Of particular significance to sustainable development are the enablements to create provincial land use and development policy, regulate development where the Minister has jurisdiction, establish special planning areas and designate and regulate heritage roads. These are in addition to the continuation of the important role accorded municipalities, where they have developed Official Plans, in land use matters.

In addition, a new Environmental Protection Act was passed to improve the framework for environmental protection in the Province. As well a Natural Areas Protection Act was passed which enables the designation of natural areas under certain conditions.

2. Economic Regional Development Agreements (ERDA's)

An objective of the Conservation Strategy is that all relevant ERDA's should contain a significant sustainable development component. This is consistent with the approach to implementing the Conservation Strategy which sees the major role being played, at its government level, by line departments and agencies rather than establishing a separate line function for implementation purposes. The Forestry ERDA, signed in 1988, contains all of the recommendations of the Conservation Strategy. Other ERDA's are in various stages of negotiation and it is expected that all relevant ones will contain a significant Conservation component.

3. Other Agreements

The Canada - P.E.I. Soil and Water Accord and a unique Canada - P.E.I. Water Resources Management Agreement have both been signed as has a Memorandum of Understanding on Conservation and Development. The Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the Ministers of the Provincial Departments of Community and Cultural Affairs, Industry, Tourism, Energy and Forestry, Fisheries and Agriculture and the Federal Ministers of Agriculture, Fisheries and Oceans, Environment,

Regional Industrial Expansion, State (Forestry and Mines) and the Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) has the stated purpose of improving communication and coordination by ensuring that Federal, Provincial and private sector activities reinforce each other in achieving sustainable development. Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding is through a Coordinating Committee made up of representatives from the Departments and Agencies concerned and the Conservation Strategy. This Committee will publish its own activities report.

Other Federal-Provincial agreements related to sustainable development are under discussion and include, for example, one on the inland sport fishery.

4. Environmental Advisory Council

The Environmental Protection Act mandates the establishment of a Council to advise the Minister on environmental matters. The present Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was established in 1987 and reports annually to the Minister who is obliged to table the Report in the Legislative Assembly. Since, by agreement, a key role of the Council is to advise on the implementation of the Conservation Strategy there

is close cooperation between the Council and the Coordination Office. The linkages established include the position of Secretary to the EAC being a staff member of the Coordination Office as well as the Coordinator attending all Council meetings in an advisory capacity.

B. Demonstrations and Education Initiatives

The Provincial Conservation Strategy recognizes that demonstrations and other educational mechanisms, both formal and informal, can be used effectively to begin processes which reap substantial returns, albeit some of which are long term. The Strategy also accords a strong implementation role to local organizations. In keeping with these approaches several activities involving the Coordination Office have taken place. In summary they are as follows:

1) **Soil Conservation Seminar**

In February 1988 the Coordination Office, jointly with the Department of Agriculture, sponsored a soil conservation seminar. Utilizing the sources of Dr. Doug Lawrence of the Texas Department of Agriculture as keynote speaker the seminar attracted representatives of several Departments and Agencies and a cross-section

of Island farmers and environmentalists. The session developed a series of practical recommendations for improving soil conservation in the Province.

2) Soil and Water Conservation Demonstration Area

As a follow-up to a soil conservation seminar, the Memorandum of Understanding on Conservation and Development's Coordinating Committee requested a follow-up report on the recommendations emanating from the seminar. This was prepared jointly by the Coordination Office and Environment Canada. Amongst other things this report put forward a recommendation that a locally led demonstration project on a significant watershed be established. Using a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) created for the purpose, and representative of the Federal and Provincial Departments and Agencies on the MOU Coordinating Committee, a proposal to do this was developed for consideration early in 1989.

3) Brochure and Video

The Provincial Conservation Strategy contains a recommendation that the means be developed to ensure that the Strategy, and the main issues contained in it, are publicized. This has been achieved in part by the preparation of a brochure on the strategy for release

in early 1989 and the joint preparation of a soil conservation video, using local resources, by the Coordination Office and Agriculture Canada. The video is expected to be released in mid 1989.

4) Transportation Seminar

In response to a recognized problem with respect to highway right-of-way erosion, the Coordination Office, with the support of the Environmental Advisory Council and the Department of Transportation and Public Works held a one day seminar to discuss this issue. This will be followed up in 1989 with specific proposals and actions.

C. Studies and Projects

Coordination of the implementation of the Conservation Strategy led to a variety of interesting and relevant projects and studies during the reporting period. Included in these was the participation of Departments and Agencies and, in some cases, local and provincial non-government organizations. The main ones may be summarized as follows:

1. Education Study

In consultation with the Environmental Advisory Council a consulting study designed to recommend improvements to environmental education within the school system was funded. The Coordination Office also served on the Environmental Education Study Steering Committee which is comprised of the Study consultants, Department of Education, educators and representatives of environmental organizations. The study is scheduled for completion in 1989.

2. Abandoned Rail Rights-Of-Way

The Coordination Office took part in an interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Department of Transportation and Public Works, which studied and made recommendations to Executive Council on the future disposition and development of abandoned rail rights-of-way as they become available.

3. Land Development Corporation Land Study

The Coordination Office assisted in the first part of a two year study of Land Development Corporation lands which are leased to farmers with either an option to purchase or not.

4. Cavendish Sewerage

Assistance was provided in developing a plan for sewerage facilities in the "Cavendish Corner" area jointly with the Departments of Community and Cultural Affairs, Transportation and Public Works and Tourism and Parks along with the Cavendish Planning Board.

5. Heritage Roads

During the reporting period the Coordination Office assumed the staff function in connection with the designation of Heritage Roads under the Planning Act.

6. Implementation of the Natural Areas Protection Act

The Coordination Office assisted in the implementation of the Natural Areas Protection Act. This includes chairing a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of representation from the Island Nature Trust, the Parks Division of Tourism and Parks, the Fish and Wildlife Division of Community and Cultural Affairs, and the Forestry Branch of Energy and Forestry. It is expected that several properties will be designated by the Minister under the Act within the near future.

7. Montague Watershed Project

The Coordination Office assisted the Montague Watershed Project through ad hoc advice, and training of employees for stream enhancement work. The Coordination staff, in turn, received assistance and cooperation from the Montague project.

8. Conservation Awards

In cooperation with the Environmental Advisory Council annual environmental awards were established with the first presentations being made by the Minister in mid 1988.

D. Community and Non-Government Organization Projects

The Conservation Strategy calls for the establishment of a central fund to assist community groups to implement worthwhile projects and the appointment of a facilitator to assist these groups. These recommendations have been implemented. In 1987 and 1988 a total of 28 projects were funded, in part, by the Strategy's Island Conservation Assistance Program (ICAP). These projects have been supported by Federal Agencies such as the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) and the National Research Council. In addition young offenders and correctional center inmates have made a valuable contribution through their involvement in community placements as part of

their rehabilitation program. These projects serve not only to develop and implement environmental improvements but also as Island wide demonstrations of practical accomplishments. A summary of the groups assisted to date is as follows:

1987 - 88

PEI Fly Fishers Assoc.
PEI Wildlife Federation (Montague River Project)
PEI Wildlife Federation (Tignish Branch)
PEI Wildlife Federation (North Queens Branch)
PEI Wildlife Federation (Central Queens Branch)
Morell and Area Land Use Steering Committee
Island Nature Trust
PEI Natural History Society
Bonshaw Hills Trail Club

1988 - 89

<u>Group</u>	<u>No. of Employees</u>	<u>Location</u>
Provincial PEI Wildlife Federation	2	Cardigan Hatchery
Central Queens Wildlife Federation	4	Wheatley River, Clyde River
North Queens Wildlife Federation	3	Wheatley River
East Prince Wildlife Federation	4	Dunk River
O'Leary Wildlife Federation	5	Trout River

Scuris Wildlife Federation	2	Big Brook
South Kings Wildlife Federation	4	Valleyfield River
Belle River Environmental Protection Association	3	Belle River
Wildlife Habitat Canada	8*	Montague River
Morell River Management Cooperative	2	Morell River
Warren Grove	3**	Warren Grove
PEI Fly Fishers Federation	4	Bonshaw River
West Royalty (PEIFFFF)	1	Ellens Creek
Natural History Society	2	Crowbush
Ducks Unlimited	1	Marsh Survey
West Prince Bird Observatory	2	Portage
PEI Soil and Crop Association	1	Island wide survey
Island Nature Trust	7	Island wide
Kinkora and Area Business Commission	3	Dunk River

* Young Offenders participated in this project

** Correctional Center Inmates participated in this project.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Conservation Strategy has gotten off to a reasonably successful start particularly if one accepts the fact that much of the early "process" work, difficult to evaluate in the initial stages in any quantitative fashion, appears to be

becoming established. While this does not in any way indicate that this is a time for complacency or that the next stages will be easier, with a continuation of the necessary commitment from Government and maintenance of the spirit of cooperation which has been evident in the whole process, the next stages of coordination of the implementation of the strategy should be achievable.